

New Director for CIA

One of V. Adm. William F. Raborn's principal tasks as director of the Central Intelligence Agency will be to keep the activities of the huge spying organization in line with the original CIA concept. That envisioned CIA as an agency to gather, evaluate and interpret political, economic, military and scientific information from around the world and supply it to the proper policy-making authorities in the Government.

The CIA was not established to engage in "paramilitary" activities, subversion, subsidized revolt and clandestine efforts to influence foreign governments. Most of all, it was not established to make its own decisions in these areas and implement them, sometimes in contravention of United States foreign aims. The abortive Cuban invasion was such a CIA blunder.

Following the Cuban fiasco, President Kennedy asked Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, now Ambassador to South Viet Nam, to undertake a study of the agency. Gen. Taylor concluded properly that it should be confined to its original purpose. Under John A. McCone, who succeeded Allen Dulles as director, it apparently has refrained from taking operational initiatives.

But so great is the secrecy cloaking the agency that the public cannot be sure. Its appropriations are concealed; only a few persons know how or where. It has thousands of employees and spends billions of dollars a year, but what it does is sometimes disclosed only when it bungles. One of the few certainties in connection with the administration of Mr. McCone is that the CIA has not made the publicized mistakes that occurred under Mr. Dulles.

Moves have been made in Congress from time to time to set up a "watchdog" committee to oversee the operations of the CIA, but nothing has come of them. However, President Kennedy established a board of private citizens to make a continuing study of Government intelligence operations. Mr. Johnson named a special task force in January 1964 for a somewhat similar mission.

The CIA cannot operate in the spotlight of publicity, but the idea of a special congressional committee to see that it performs its functions properly, and is not profligate with the huge sums at its disposal, is attractive. In any case it should be possible for the director to enforce the right policies. So as Adm. Raborn takes over from Mr. McCone, that will be his job.

CPYRGHT